

# Artificial Turf: How to Make Humanity the Center of the AI Playing Field

(AI: Artificial Intelligence)

**Presented By**

**[Meena Das](#)**

(Presented by)



(Hosted by)



**ORANGE COUNTY  
GRANTMAKERS**

Living in algorithms can be scary.

*\*"Everybody" refers to those who are impacted by AI knowing or unknowingly.*

AI is something that

**everybody**\* uses.

**few** care to talk about it.

**fewer** fully understand.

We need to  
talk about  
what it means  
for us to be in  
algorithms  
because...

AI could contribute  
**\$15.7**  
**trillion**  
to the global economy  
by **2030**

*As per PwC's 2022 research*

## Land Acknowledgement

*I respectfully acknowledge that I am fortunate to live, learn, and provide my services on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkwə́əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.*

Where am I coming into this conversation?

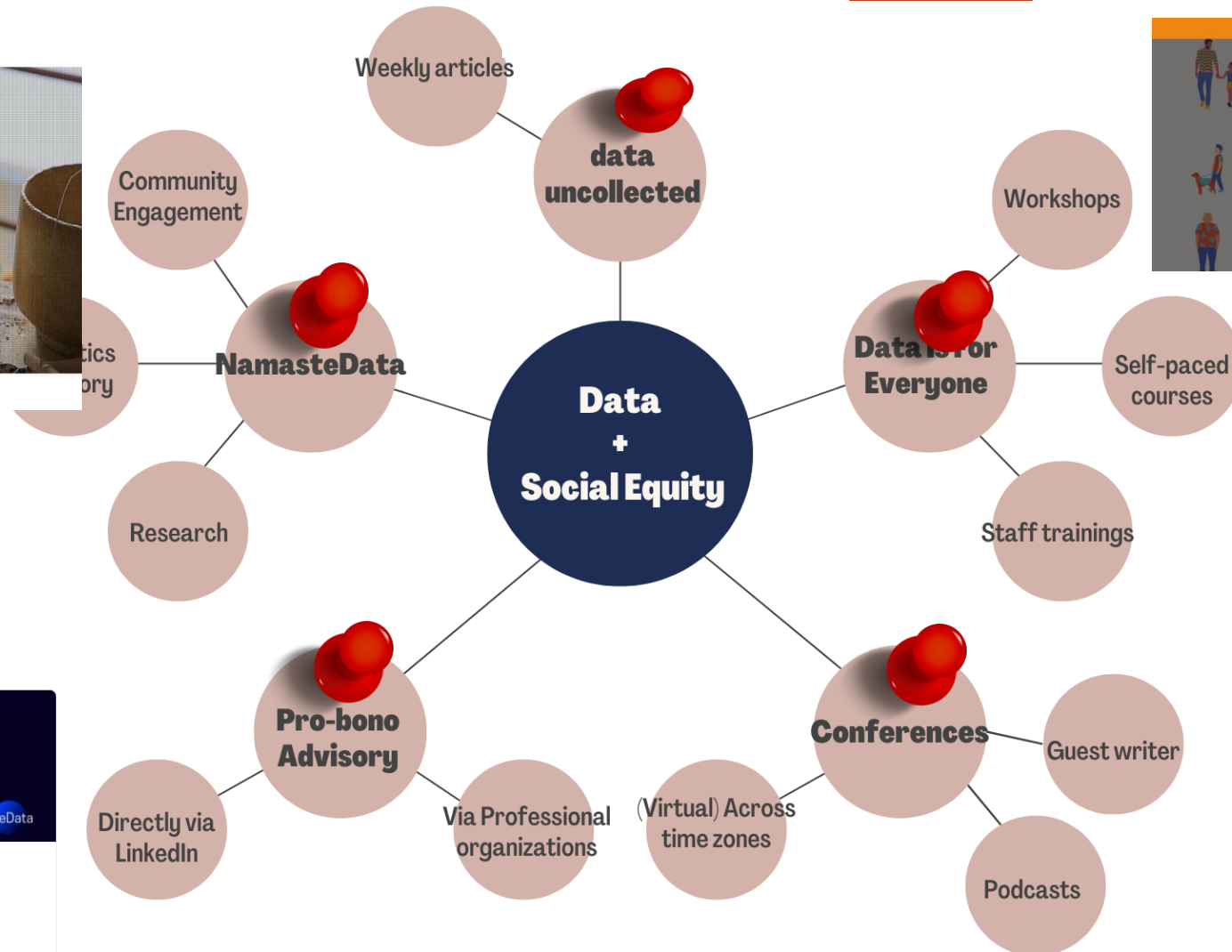
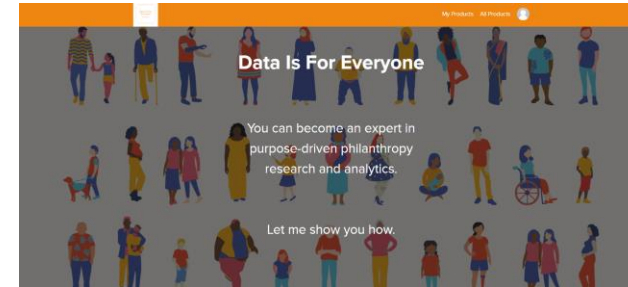
- Storyteller
- Facilitator
- Explorer
- Learner
- ~~Cautiously optimistic~~  
Consciously optimistic

**Experiential Learning**

**data  
uncollected**  
with Meena Das

*Dear*  
**HUMAN**

NamasteData HOME ABOUT ME MY WHY MY WORK OUR SUCCESS YOUR GROWTH



www.namastedata.org

Research & Analytics

Social equity & Inclusion

NamasteData

**Meenakshi (Meena) Das**  
Founder & Philanthropy Analytics Consultant at NamasteData | I help organizations find the strategic value of their data | Mentor & volunteer for social justice issues  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada · 500+ connections

Independent Consultant - [www.namastedata.org](http://www.namastedata.org)

[Websites](#)

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# My work

# Our plan today:

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## A. Basics:

- i. AI as it exists today
- ii. Why are we “centering community” in algorithms?
- iii. So, the problem is?
- iv. What can we do?
- v. Group exercise

## B. Let’s talk!

Where am I coming into  
this conversation?






- Storyteller
- Facilitator
- Explorer
- Learner
- ~~Cautiously optimistic~~  
Consciously optimistic








# AI is already used in daily life.

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**ON YOUR SMARTPHONE...**

Ok Google	Hey Siri	Hey Cortana	Translate	Maps
				
What channel does GoT Air On?			Que voulez-vous dire...	Way from the airport to home

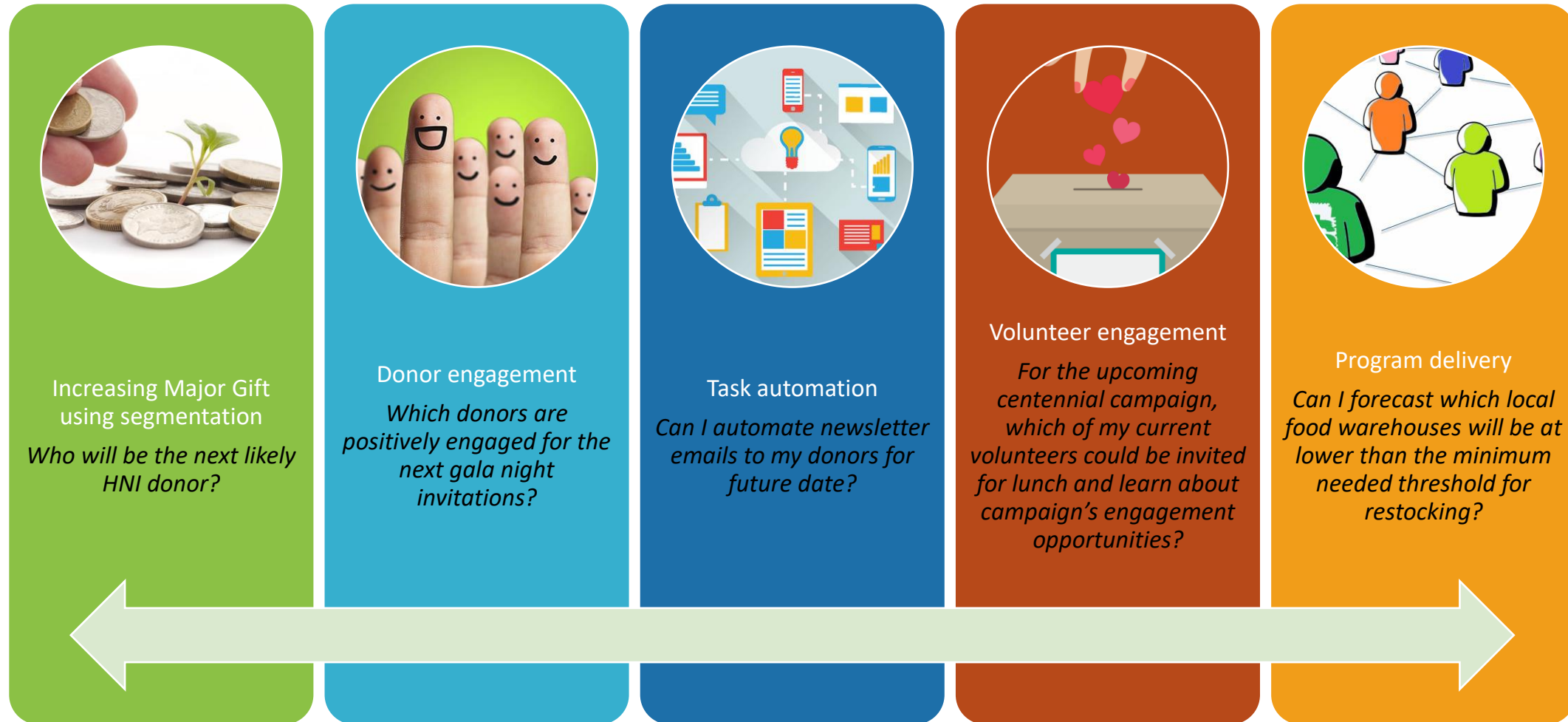
**WHEN YOU'RE...**

FB Moments	Shopping	Videos	Music	Email
				
Pics of you & I at Anna's party	Customers who bought This item also ..	Other movies you might...	Recommended	Primary inbox, smart reply

**MAKING BUSINESS HAPPEN...**

Robo-advisor	Scoring Engine	Marketing & Advertising	Fraud Detection
			
Your Investment Portfolio	Writing Proficiency	Brining it all together in Real-Time	Machine Learning at play

# And this is how it looks like in nonprofits...



# Take another example: as a funding organization...

- **Grant Evaluation:** Use AI algorithms to evaluate grant applications based on historical data and predictive models.
- **Impact Tracking:** Utilize AI to track the real-time impact of your funding on various projects.
- **Donor Matching:** Implement AI to match potential donors with projects that align with their interests.
- **Fraud Detection:** Employ AI to detect any fraudulent activities within the projects you are funding.
- **Forecasting:** Use AI to predict the future success of a project based on current and past data.

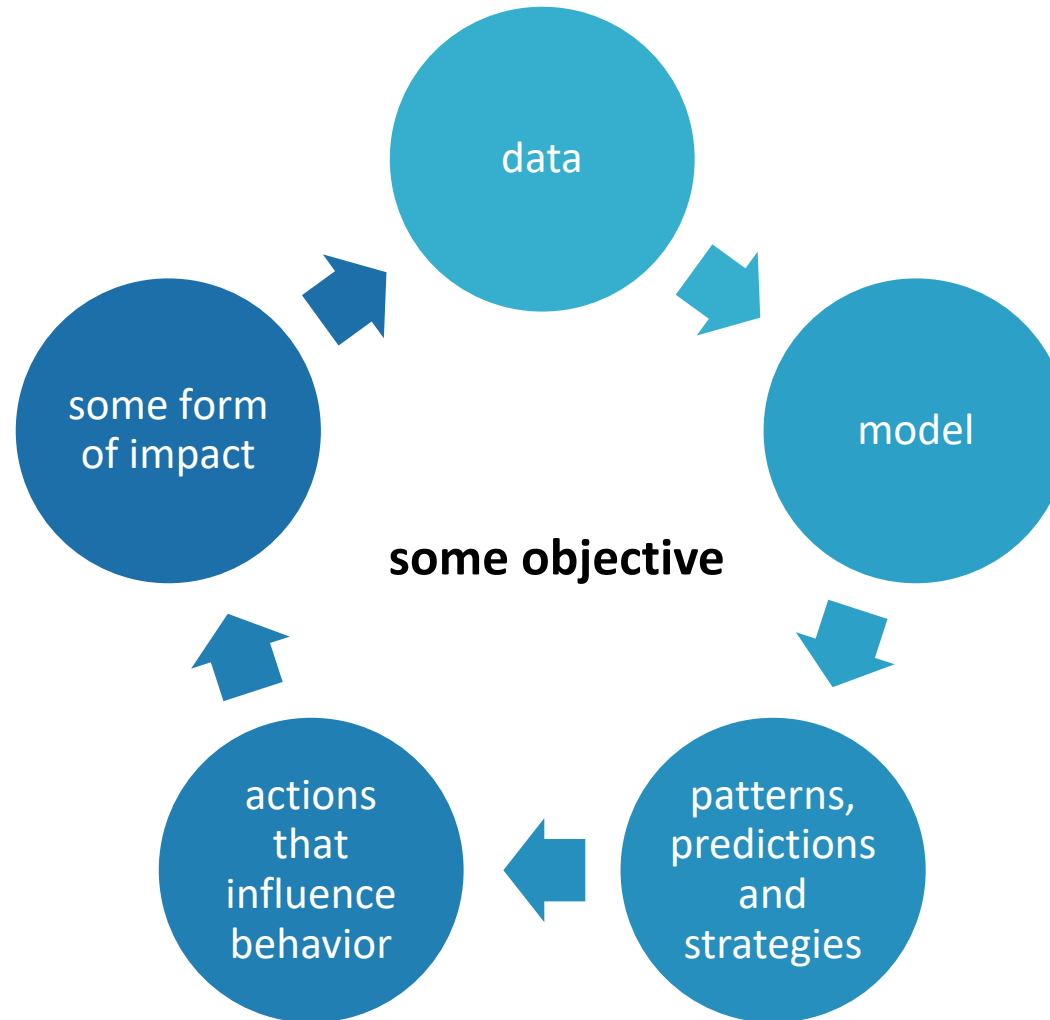
**“How can I use this slide?” tip**

Pick every example here and write 5 ways the algorithm might de-center humans.

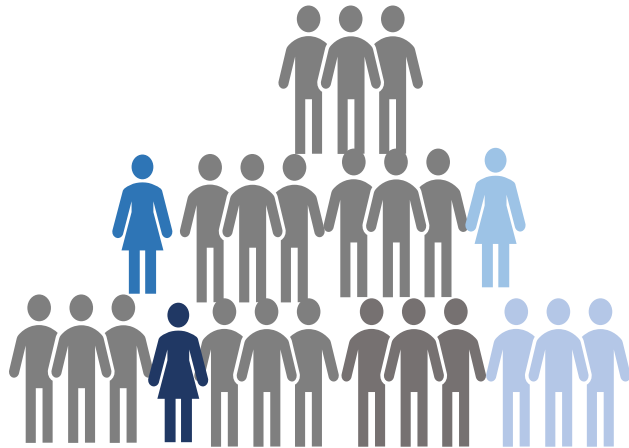
# Why are we “centering community” in algorithms?

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# The wheel of AI:



# What data are we centering?



Example Scenario



1<sup>st</sup> generation Asian immigrant, cis woman, Indian descendent with visual disability. Immigrated in 2015.



1<sup>st</sup> generation Asian immigrant, cis woman, Indian descendent with language barrier. Immigrated in 1978.

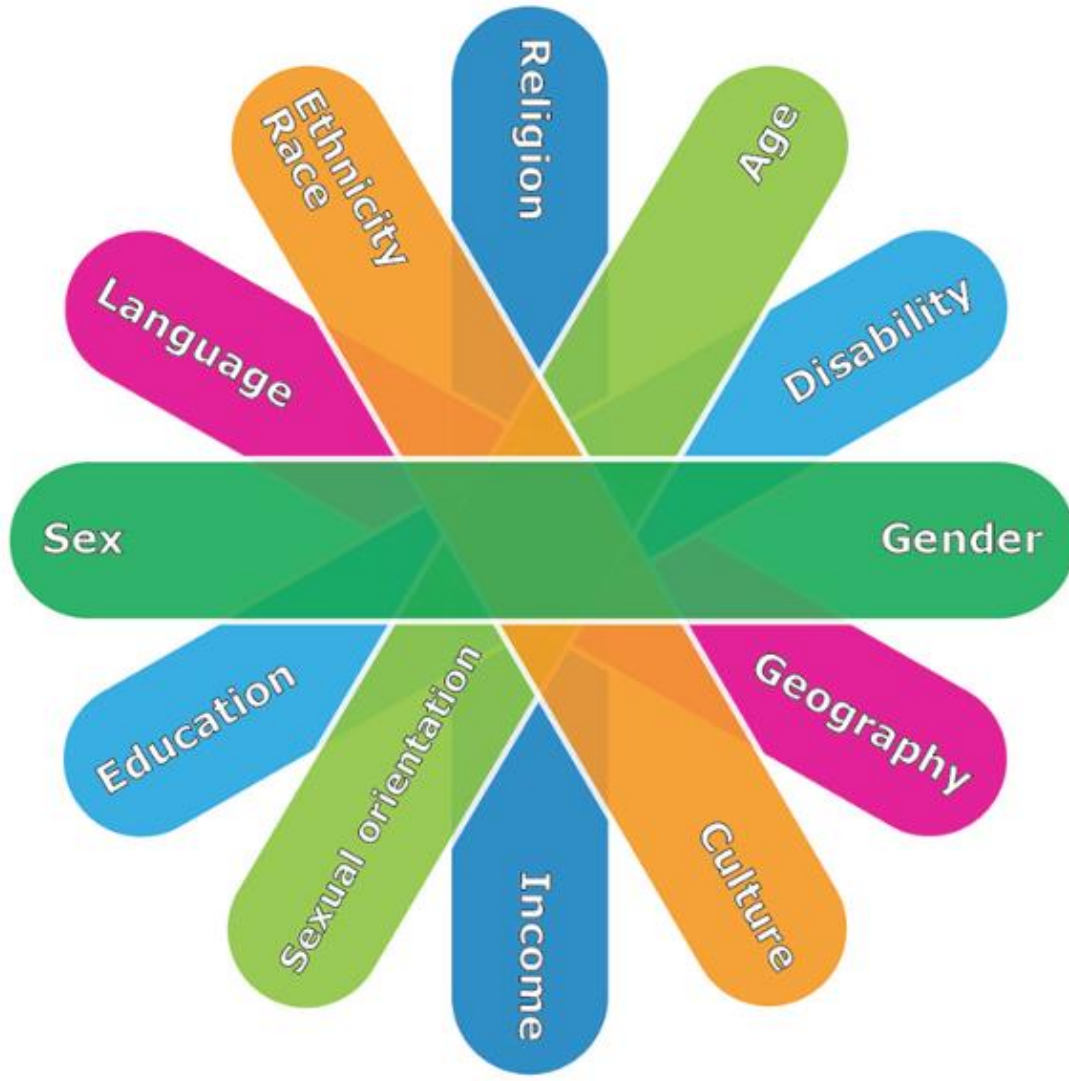


2<sup>nd</sup> generation Asian immigrant, trans woman, with no disabilities.



White, cis-gender, able-bodied, native English speaker. (the majority population)

## Let's talk about data for a minute.

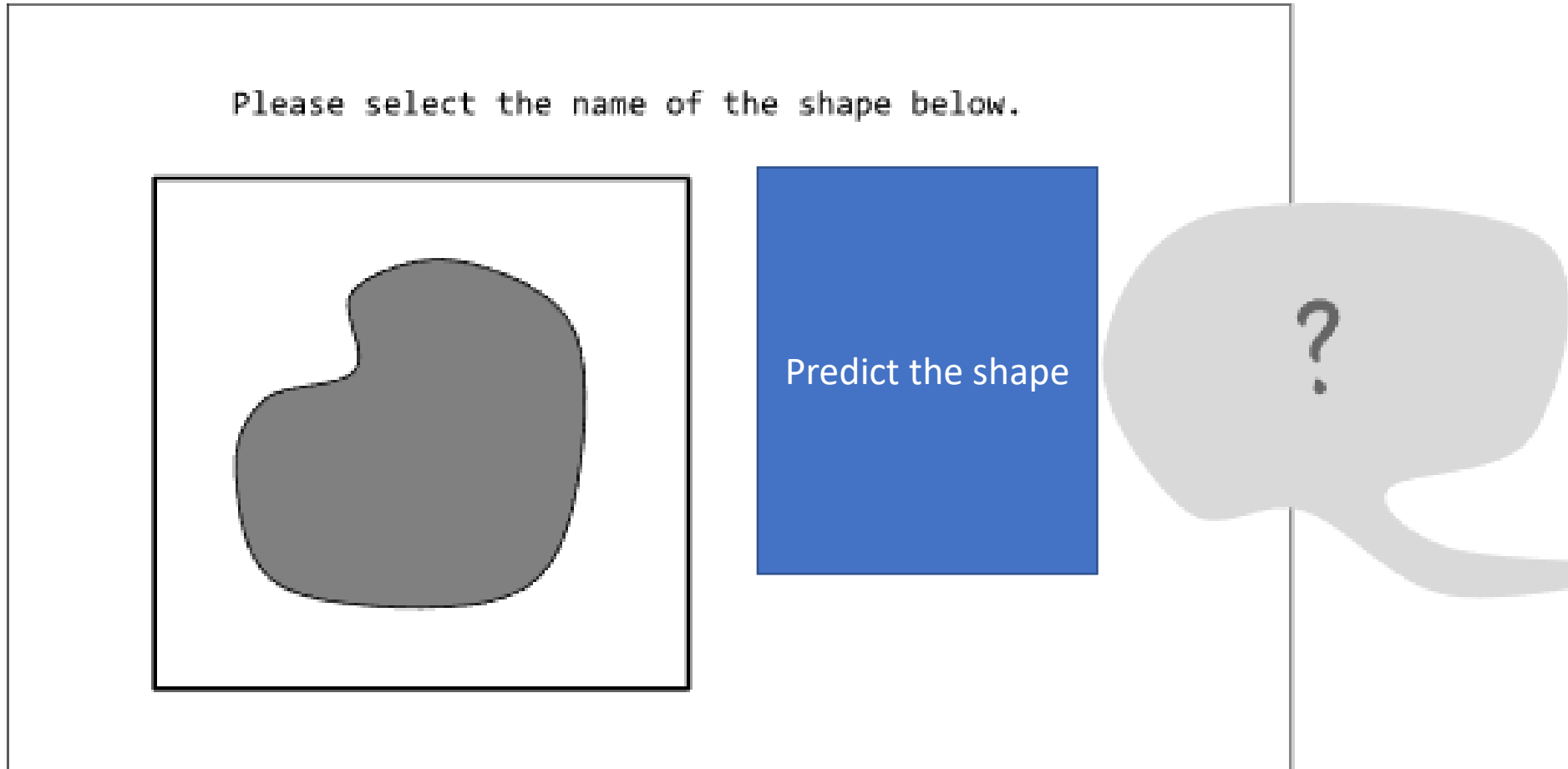


Imagine the nuances with intersectionality at play...

e.g., algorithm to predict “good immigrants”

# Whose voice are we centering?

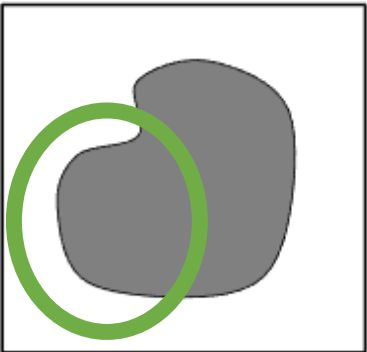
Example:





# What are we feeding into our algorithms? Whose view is it?

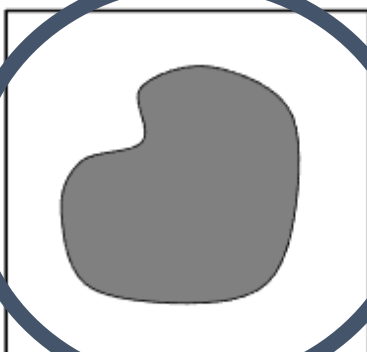
Please select the name of the shape below.



☐ circle  
☐ triangle  
☐ rectangle

?

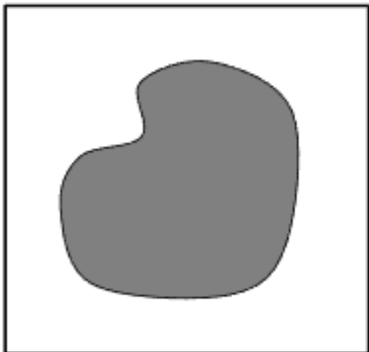
Please select the name of the shape below.



☐ circle  
☐ triangle  
☐ rectangle

?

Please select the name of the shape below.



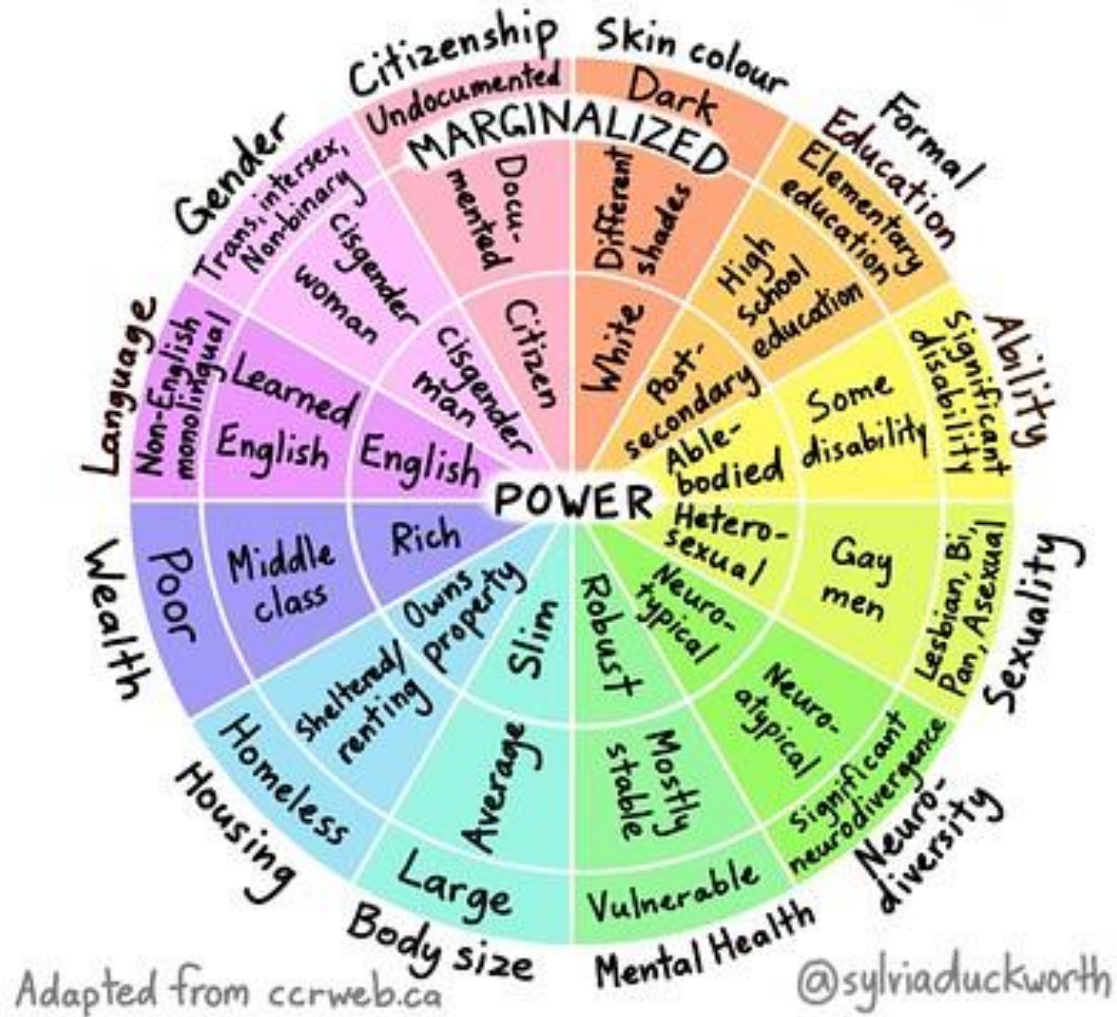
☐ circle  
☐ triangle  
☐ rectangle

?

There are 3 views to say “all shapes are”:

- Circle, triangle and rectangle
- Round or pointy
- Small or big

# WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



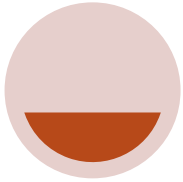
Examples of actors in designing an algorithm who come from different power/privilege:

- Leadership
- Analysts
- Tech vendors
- End-users (e.g., fundraisers)
- External community

We need to center our community, so we don't miss essential voices that impacts and gets impacted through the algorithm directly.

# So, where is the problem with AI?

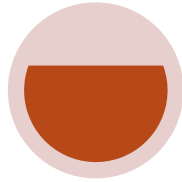
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## Problem #1

new ways to sort,  
profile biased data  
that can lead to  
exclusion, tokenism,  
and discrimination.

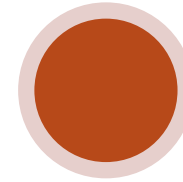
**Unintentional segmentation**



## Problem #2

complexity, opacity,  
and proprietary nature  
of many AI systems  
mean that often we  
don't know things  
have gone wrong until  
after large number of  
people have been  
affected.

**Lack of clarity in the design**

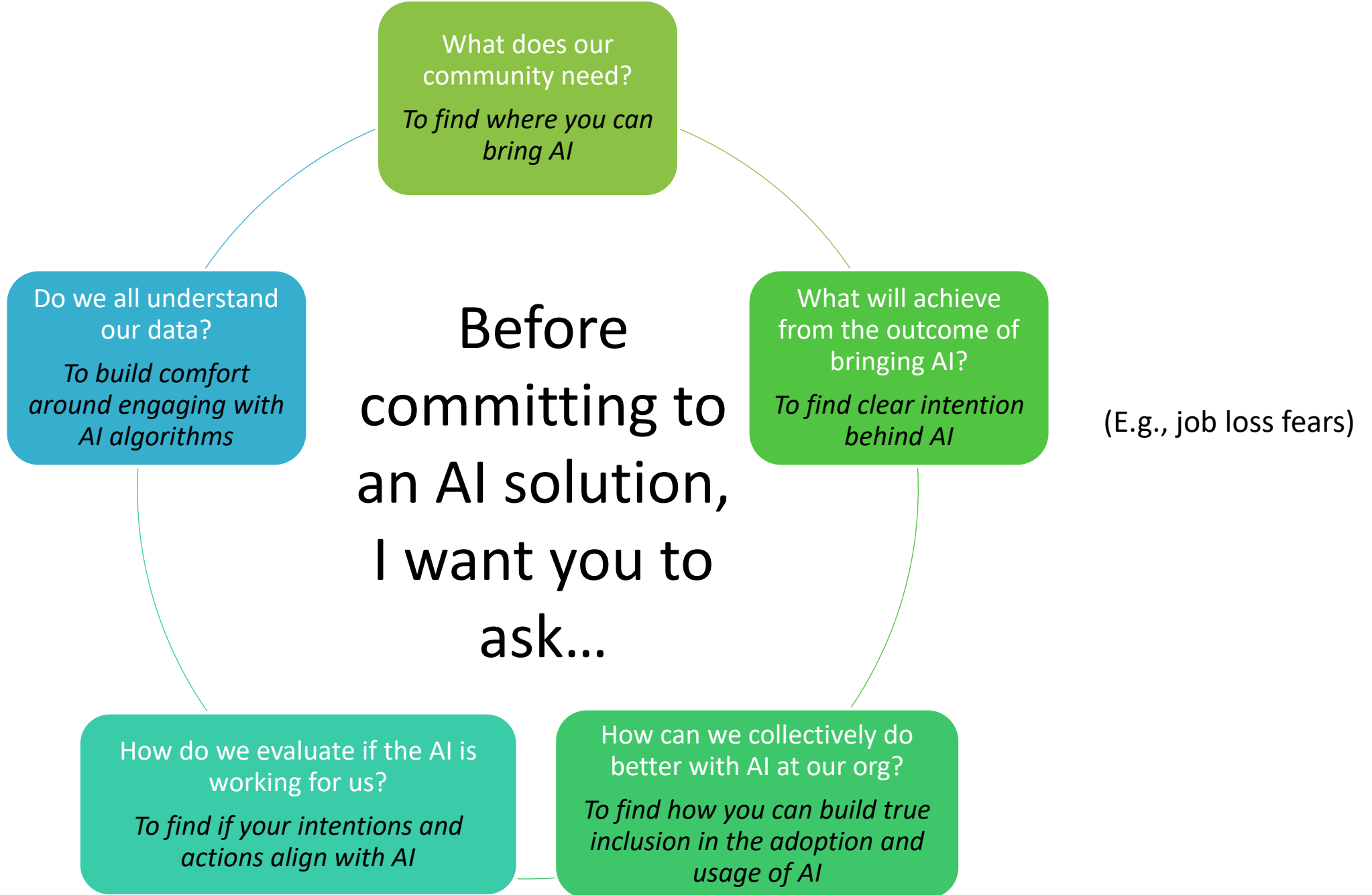


## Problem #3

few people have the  
skills needed to  
interrogate and  
challenge these new  
automated and  
predictive systems.

**Lack of knowledge and comfort**

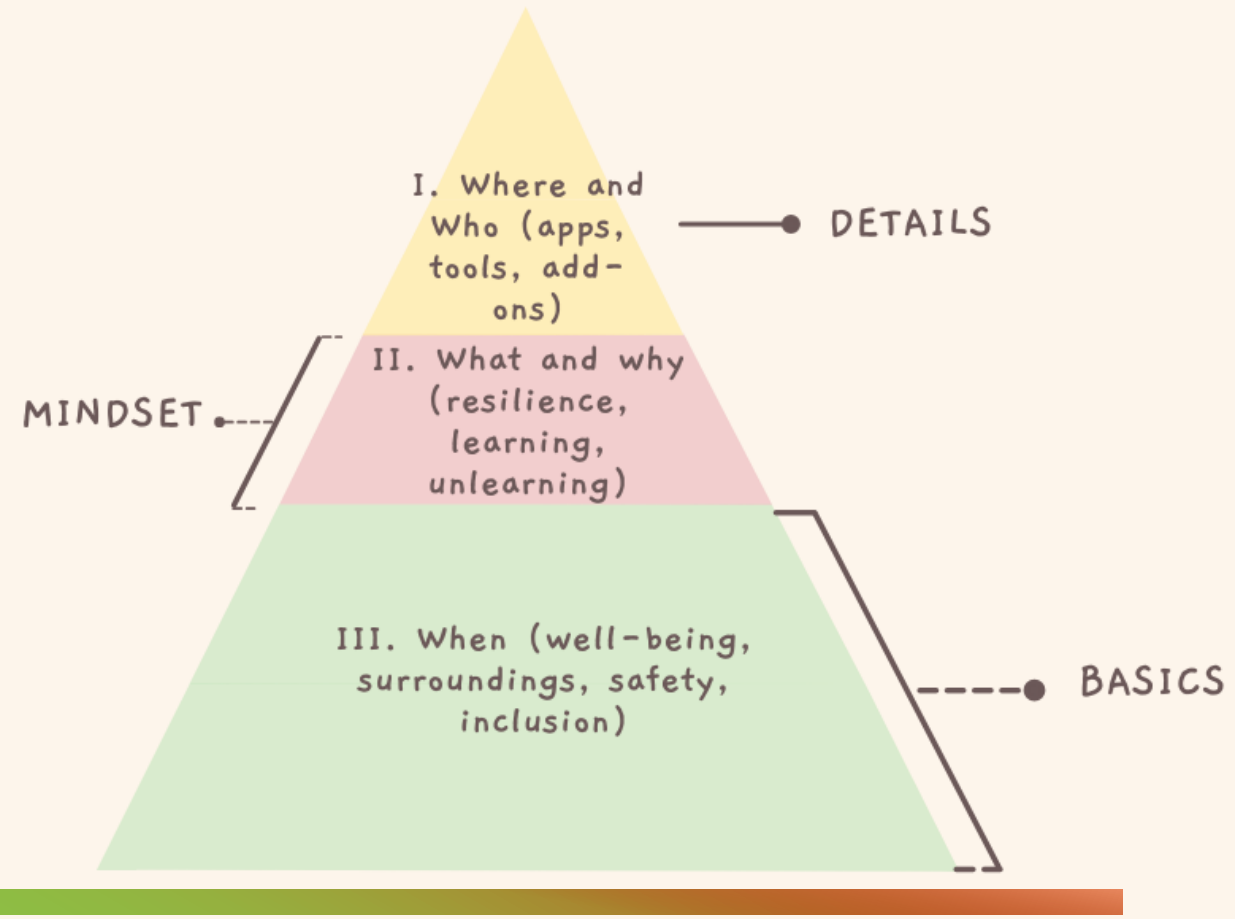
What can *you* do as a user?



In other words:

use Basics-Mindset-Details to find if are you ready for AI.

## THE 3 TIERS OF AI OPPORTUNITY



@NAMASTEDATA

# Exercise: Is my team/org ready for AI?

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You can take a  
minute to  
form your  
thoughts

Step 1: Find one use case where you intend to use AI in your team/org.

# Exercise: Is my team/org ready for AI?

You can take a minute to form your thoughts

Step 2: Now for every question of this pyramid give yourself 3 points for yes, 1 point for maybe, and 0 for a no.

## “How can I use this slide?” tip

Pull the next three slides, and re-run this exercise with a variety of team members (analysts, leadership, IT team etc.)

### THE 3 TIERS OF AI OPPORTUNITY





# Tier 1: Basics - Creating a Safe Space for AI Exploration

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You can take a minute to form your thoughts

1. Inclusive Culture: Is your organization open to new ideas and technologies?
2. Leadership Buy-In: Do the leaders understand the potential of AI and are they willing to invest in it?
3. Employee Engagement: Are employees encouraged to bring innovative ideas to the table?
4. Risk Tolerance: Is the organization willing to take calculated risks for long-term benefits?
5. Ethical Framework: Is there an ethical code that can guide AI implementation?

# Tier 2: Mindset - Fostering a Learning Culture

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You can take a minute to form your thoughts

1. Clear Objectives: Does the organization have a clear understanding of why it wants to implement AI?
2. Problem Identification: Can you identify specific problems that AI can solve?
3. Learning Culture: Is there a culture of continuous learning and upskilling?
4. Unlearning Old Habits: Is the organization willing to let go of outdated practices?
5. Knowledge Sharing: Is there a system for sharing knowledge and best practices within the organization?

You can take a  
minute to  
form your  
thoughts

# Tier 3: Details - Tools and Resources

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1. Budget Allocation: Is there a budget set aside for AI projects?
2. Talent Pool: Do you have access to AI experts, or are you willing to hire or train existing staff?
3. Data Readiness: Is your data structured and clean, ready for AI processing?
4. Technology Infrastructure: Do you have the hardware and software to support AI algorithms?
5. Project Management: Is there a dedicated team or individual responsible for overseeing AI projects?

# Let's chat

What is one thing you can  
**start**, **continue**, and **stop** if  
you want to move up in  
your score?

## Add points to find your total score

- **0-15:** Your organization is not ready for AI, *yet*. Focus on building a conducive environment and culture.
- **16-30:** Your organization is somewhat ready but needs to address several key areas.
- **31-45:** Your organization is ready for AI. Proceed with planning and implementation.

Ask yourself

What is *my* role in the kind of future / want to live in?

# Let's wrap-up

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By the end of this session, we  
promised:

- Why “towards human-centric”? Why now?
- AI as it exists today
- So, the problem is?
- What can we do?

# What can you do now?

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1. Unpack this session within your team and for yourself:
  - What is *your* role with algorithms in generating trust with your community?
  - What is *your team's* role with algorithms?
2. Reach out with questions, thoughts and ideas.

# You can reach me...

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## On what?

*Examples include:*

- Individual mentorship for AI and analytics
- Create AI roadmap for nonprofit
- AI training for leadership and staff
- Support for AI vendor selection

## How?

### • By Website:

- NamasteData: [www.namastedata.org](http://www.namastedata.org)
- Data Is For Everyone: [data-is-for-everyone](http://data-is-for-everyone)
- Bi-weekly email newsletter: <http://eepurl.com/h92c8f>

### • By Workshop: Take *Towards Human-Centric AI* workshop:

<https://data-is-for-everyone.teachable.com/p/workshop-towards-human-centric-ai>



# Links for you:

- Bi-weekly email series, “Dear Human” on data equity:  
<http://eepurl.com/h92c8f>
- LinkedIn newsletter, “data uncollected” – for the articles on AI, data, and ethics.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/newsletters/data-uncollected-6887420258538405888/>
- 3-hour Live Workshop: Towards Human-Centric AI:  
<https://data-is-for-everyone.teachable.com/p/workshop-towards-human-centric-ai>

